



Attorney General Jon Bruning

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 8, 2013

Contact: Shannon L. Kingery
402.471.2067
Shannon.kingery@nebraska.gov

Conviction in 1989 Cold Case: John Oldson Guilty of Murdering Cathy Beard

LINCOLN – Attorney General Jon Bruning today announced John Oldson, 47, was convicted on one count of second degree murder for the 1989 death of Cathy Beard. He faces a possible life sentence for the Class IB felony. Sentencing will be held April 1, 2013.

“Nebraska law enforcement can be trusted to doggedly pursue justice – however long it takes. This conviction is a testament to that dedication and perseverance,” said Bruning. “After nearly 25 years, John Oldson is being held accountable for murdering Cathy Beard. Hopefully, this decision brings a sense of closure to those who loved her.”

Cathy Beard was last seen leaving the Some Place Else Tavern in Ord with John Oldson, on May 31, 1989. The skeletal remains of the 31-year-old waitress were found in a rural Valley County pasture three years later.

Oldson was charged with Beard’s murder in January 2012.

At trial, forensic pathologist Dr. Matthias Okoye explained that a team of forensic experts were on hand during the examination of Beard’s remains in 1992. After the examination, he ruled the death a homicide and determined the cause to be blunt force trauma to the head and trunk. He said stab wounds to the rib and vertebrae would have contributed to her death.

More than 40 witnesses testified during the two-week trial. The jury returned with the conviction after nearly seven hours of deliberation.

Assistant Attorneys General Corey O’Brien and Matt Lierman handled the case in cooperation with Valley County Attorney Glenn Clark. Investigative support was

provided by investigators Pat Mason and Bill Black of the Attorney General's Office, Jay Morrow of the Nebraska State Patrol and Valley County Sheriff Casey Hurlburt.